



MEMORANDUM
APRIL 5, 2019

TO: **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

FROM: **ANDY MUELLER, GENERAL MANAGER**

SUBJECT: **GENERAL MANAGER'S UPDATE**

ACTION: *Specific Board Actions are requested on the following items and Staff's recommendations are detailed in the issue specific memorandums attached to this memo:*

- e. New Cost Share Agreement with the Water Bank Work Group partners;*
- f. Authorization and Resolution for staff to apply for a WaterSmart grant from the Bureau of Reclamation to support Water Bank Work Group, Risk Study and Stakeholder engagement; and*
- g. Approval of a contract for technical assistance with Bishop, Brogden and Associates related to the Upper Colorado Wild and Scenic stakeholder process.*

a. Update on Discussions Regarding a Drought Contingency Plans on the Colorado River

APPLICABLE STRATEGIC INITIATIVE(S):

4. Colorado River Supplies:

- 4. A. The River District will advocate for full use of its Colorado River Basin water supplies for the benefit of the District's inhabitants, without undue risk of overdevelopment.*
- 4. B. The River District will advocate for full protection and preservation of water rights perfected by use prior to the effective date of the 1922 Compact and thereby excluded from curtailment in the event of compact administration.*
- 4. C. The River District will continue to study mechanisms, such as a Compact Water Bank and Contingency Planning that include demand management, drought operations of CRSP reservoirs, and water supply augmentation to address the risk of overdevelopment.*
- 4. D. The River District will work with the State Engineer's Office and other interested parties to develop an equitable mechanism for potential compact administration.*

6. Agricultural Water Use:

- 6. A. The River District will continue to study the concept of a voluntary and compensated compact water bank in collaboration with other stakeholders to best preserve western Colorado agriculture.*
- 6. B. The River District will explore alternative transfer methods that allow agricultural water users to*

benefit from the value of their water rights without the permanent transfer of the rights, and without adverse impacts to the local communities and the regional economy.

6. C. Although the River District recognizes that some reductions in demands of agricultural water rights may be necessary to protect existing water uses in the basin, the District will work to ensure that the burden of demand reduction is shared across all types of water use sectors, and that agricultural water rights, and agriculture itself, are not injured.

6. D. The River District will protect the integrity of senior agricultural water rights within Colorado's prior appropriation system, recognizing the potential risks to those rights posed by the constitution's municipal right of condemnation.

8. Colorado's Water Plan:

8. B. The River District will work with the, Southwest Water Conservation District, the Southwest Basin Roundtable and the three Basin Roundtables that comprise the District to achieve a consistent West Slope perspective related to contingency planning and compact administration risk matters.

8. E. The River District will work to ensure that the IBCC Conceptual Framework is honored and fairly implemented.

1. Interstate Drought Contingency Planning Update

As mentioned in my March 21, 2019 email to the Board, the seven basin states finally reached agreement as to the content of both the Upper Basin and Lower Basin Drought Contingency Plans (DCP) on March 19th. Before the celebratory champagne was even uncorked in Phoenix, the seven states commenced a concerted lobbying effort to win congressional approval to the legislation necessary for the implementation of the DCP agreements. While the seven states' representatives have indicated their approval of the DCP documents, there will be no formal execution of those agreements until the DCP legislation passes both houses and is signed by the President. As with most historic agreements on the Colorado River, there is one important and potentially problematic hold out, the Imperial Irrigation District (IID). IID holds rights to approximately 3.3 Million Acre Feet (MAF) and is the most senior water allottee in the Lower Basin. IID's opposition to the DCP is not based in objections to the water savings plans contained within the DCP, but rather that they want the federal government to commit in a binding manner to expending 200 million dollars on remedies for the shrinking Salton Sea before they will support the agreements. Metropolitan Water District of Southern California has committed to covering the reductions in use that would have been assigned to IID and water users in California have assured the rest of the Basin that they will have the support of a vast majority if not the entirety of the California congressional delegation.

There have been subcommittee hearings in both the Senate and the House on the DCP legislation and the legislation is beginning to make its tortuous way through the meat grinder. The most recent draft version of federal legislation that we have seen is as follows:

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Colorado River Drought Contingency Plan Authorization Act".

SEC. 2. COLORADO RIVER BASIN DROUGHT CONTINGENCY PLANS.

(a) In General.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law expressly addressing the operation of the applicable Colorado River System reservoirs, immediately upon execution of the March 19, 2019, versions of the Agreement Concerning Colorado River Drought Contingency Management and Operations and the agreements attached thereto as Attachments A1, A2, and B, by all of the non-Federal parties thereto, the Secretary of the Interior shall, without delay, execute such agreements, and is directed and authorized to carry out the provisions of such agreements and operate applicable Colorado River System reservoirs accordingly.

(b) Effect.—Nothing in this section shall—

- (1) be construed or interpreted as precedent for the litigation of, or as altering, affecting, or being deemed as a congressional determination regarding, the water rights of the United States, any Indian Tribe, band, or community, any State or political subdivision or district of a State, or any person; or*
- (2) exempt the implementation of such agreements and the operation of applicable Colorado River System reservoirs from any requirements of applicable Federal environmental laws.*

In addition to the above draft statutory language, it is anticipated that there will be an accompanying Report with language along the lines of the following:

Draft Report Language (tentative): "It is expected that the Secretary will immediately sign the identified agreements since the actions to be undertaken are within the analyses and range of effects reviewed in the environmental documents prepared pursuant to the [Endangered Species Act \(ESA\)](#) and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in the 2007 final environmental impact statement (EIS) on Colorado River Interim Guidelines for Lower Basin Shortages and Coordinated Operations for Lakes Powell and Mead; and the EISs [and ESA documents](#) prepared for operation of the Colorado River Storage Project Act initial storage unit reservoirs. Additional [environmental](#) compliance is only applicable should future [federal](#) actions be undertaken that are outside the range of effects analyzed in those documents or the applicable [Records of Decision](#)."

In general, this legislation is close to what we expected in late November of 2018 when you last acted on this issue. Staff does have concerns about some of the ambiguous language in the proposed legislation, however, we believe it is generally consistent with this Board's direction on this issue. We welcome your input and thoughts on this at the meeting.

2. Intrastate Demand Management Planning Update

As a reminder, the Upper Basin DCP documents do not in and of themselves establish a Demand Management Program (DMP) in the Upper Basin or within the State of Colorado. Provided the

federal legislative effort is successful, the Upper Basin will have a storage account in the initial CRSP reservoirs (Powell, Navaho, Aspinall and Flaming Gorge) which can be filled with intentionally conserved water free of charge and not subject to balancing or equalization. Before any state or water user can contribute water into the storage account, the Upper Division states must reach unanimous agreement with respect to the details of a four state DMP and each state, including Colorado, must create such a program.

At its meeting in March of this year, the CWCB approved the proposed staff work plan for studying a Colorado DMP. Pursuant to the CWCB's November 2018 Policy Statement any DMP in Colorado must be a Voluntary Compensated DMP (VCDMP). The CWCB staff's approved 2019 work plan consists of the establishment of eight small "work groups" which will feed into and work in conjunction with multiple larger workshops where water user input will be solicited. The eight work groups are:

Law and Policy

Monitoring and Verification

Water Rights Administration and Accounting

Environmental Considerations

Economic Considerations

Funding

Education and Outreach

Agricultural Impacts

We have suggested River District staff members for each of these committees and requested that they be included in these groups when they are constituted. It is likely that the membership of these committees will be made public prior to our April quarterly Board meeting. CWCB Director Becky Mitchell will be present at our Board meeting on the morning of the 17th for a discussion with the Board. Please feel free to discuss any and all questions and/or concerns you have with this process to Director Mitchell.

Given the rocky and slow pace of the seven state agreement and the yet to be completed final federal legislation, I have been slow to formally convene the River District VCDMP task force we discussed in January. While I believe that it is a good thing for West Slope water users to be proactive in developing concepts and proposed rules for any eventual VCDMP, I have been reluctant to devote significant resources to this effort until there is a greater likelihood of the federal legislative effort becoming law. It is likely that we will be convening this group within the next month.

b. Colorado River District Long Term Budget Planning.

No Action Requested, just general direction

Applicable Strategic Plan Initiatives:

12. Financial Sustainability: The above strategic initiatives cannot be achieved without financial sustainability. The River District enjoys a diversified tax base for its Governmental Funds, which helps

to reduce the impacts of dramatic downturns in its overall assessed valuation. Over the long-term, the Enterprise Fund is intended to be self-sustaining, managing the River District's Business-Type Activities.

13. Asset Management: *The River District will plan and implement operation, maintenance and replacement (OM&R) activities to ensure the reliable and safe operation of all River District owned facilities and properties. The District recognizes that the significant investment in these assets as well as the financial stability of our District and Enterprise must be protected by regular maintenance and repair of its assets.*

Thank you for participating in our February 15, 2019 Budget Workshop. I and the rest of the staff truly appreciated your commitment of time and thoughtfulness on this subject. The Board expressed significant concern about the impact of declining or flat revenue and its effect on the District's ability to fulfill its mission. We heard consensus from the Board on a number of key points and we heard requests for additional information which will be helpful to you as you contemplate the best way for the District to address our looming budget shortfalls.

A glimmer of short term good news emerged from Denver this week on the potential decline in the Residential Assessment Rate (RAR). The Special District Association indicated that the Governor is working closely with legislative leaders to find a way to keep the RAR at 7.2% rather than drop it to the recently forecast 6.95% or previously forecast 6.11%. This is good news for the next two years, but it does not present a long term solution to the impacts of the declining RAR on our District revenues nor does it address the continuing impact on our District from declining revenue from the energy sector or the effects of the spending cap and tax rate cap imposed by TABOR.

Areas of consensus:

- The Board believes in and supports the District's mission and believes that a strong and viable Colorado River District is important to the economic and environmental health of the communities and Rivers of the West Slope.
- The Board recognized the need for belt tightening at the District and it fully supports Management's effort to reduce expenditures over the last year which included:
 - A reduction in staff from approximately 26 FTEs in January of 2018 to a projected 21 or 22 FTEs by January of 2020 (a 15-19% reduction in force);
 - The reduction of the District's vehicle fleet by two vehicles (approximately 25% reduction);
 - A temporary (hopefully) cessation of the District's grant program (a \$150,000.00 to \$250,000.00 annual savings); and
 - Additional miscellaneous cost savings measures.
- The Board is concerned that without a fiscal fix (which likely would require voter approval), the District will face declining revenues which will result in a serious threat to the District's ability to successfully achieve its mission.
- The Board has respect for voters' perspectives favoring lean governmental operations and historical willingness to only pass tax measures which are necessary to sustain basic

governmental purposes as long as any additional tax burden brings significant benefit to the taxpayers.

- The Board recognizes that the costs of any election to the District are significant, coming primarily from the fees which would need to be paid to all fifteen counties' election officials, and that any such effort should only be pursued if it is necessary to preserve the District's ability to fulfil its mission and presents a significant likelihood of resolving the District's long term fiscal issues.

The Board asked the staff to gather additional information and analyze various approaches to resolving the fiscal issues facing the District. At the quarterly meeting, staff will present detailed analysis on several of the questions posed by the Board in February and walk through further analysis of the various options. Based upon Board direction and our additional research, we believe that the Board has four basic options, some of which have variations depending upon whether, if a ballot question is eventually pursued, you wish to add a TABOR spending cap relief and/or a Gallagher relief question. Additionally, the Board will want to consider whether it should pursue any request for assistance from voters in 2019 or 2020.

Potential Approaches:

1. No Action. A decision to take no action in either 2019 or 2020 will most likely result in significant declining revenue to the District. A decision to pursue this course of action will most likely mean that the District will be unable to restore its grant program, will likely have trouble providing meaningful financial assistance to others and will likely lead to additional significant reductions in the District work force. All of which will have measurable impacts on the District's ability to protect, develop and conserve the water resources of the District and Colorado's apportionment of the Colorado River.
2. Gallagher Amendment Mitigation. This approach would involve asking the voters to give the District's Board the authority to adjust its mill levy to mitigate the impact of a declining RAR. In other words, this approach would empower the Board to keep revenues equal to what they would have been if the RAR stayed at the present 7.20%. Colorado Mountain College was successful in its 5 county district asking this question as a "non-tax increase" question in 2018. We have modeled the impact of a question like this by projecting our District's average local growth rate over the last five years (.718%) over the next twenty years and by repeating the last 20 years of variable growth. Both modeled scenarios indicate that the District's revenues would continue to decline even with a successful election. Under both of these scenarios our expenses with a 3.5% growth rate would exceed our revenue within just a few years.
3. Voter approval to Adjust Mill Levy at a Pace Equal to Inflation Plus Local Growth. This option was discussed at the budget workshop. The idea was discussed as an approach that would be consistent with many voter's understanding of the intent of TABOR as it would cap any tax rate increase to keep track with inflation. We have confirmed that such a question, if pursued would in fact be a tax increase and would require the TABOR tax increase language. We have modeled this question against both potential futures discussed

above and this would, if passed by the voters result in a revenue stream which would allow the District to continue existing operations with the anticipated 3.5% growth rate in expenses. This option would not result in the District being able to bring significant additional assistance to water projects or river health efforts but may allow us to restore a modest grant program. This request would not include a "de-Brusing" of the spending limitation. I understand that there are significant concerns about the viability of this approach which we should discuss at the April quarterly meeting.

4. **Mill Levy Increase.** This approach would involve asking the voters to increase our mill levy potentially restoring to our pre-1992 level of approximately one half of a mill. The District's mill levy was initially capped by the legislature at the request of the District's original founders at 2.5 mills. The mill levy sits today at .252 or slightly more than one tenth of the originally authorized mill. An increase in the mill levy to .5 would raise approximately 4.1 million dollars in additional revenue annually and enable the District to bring significant financial assistance to our consumptive and non-consumptive water users to conduct conservation, efficiency and rehabilitation projects as we all adapt to the changes in our precipitation patterns and flow reductions in the rivers. An increase of this size would allow the District to stay fiscally solvent in the foreseeable future. We have modeled this option under both fiscal futures addressed above and we will present detailed information about this at the meeting. In order for the District to avoid the TABOR related limitations on state grants that we are currently projecting in our Enterprise, the Board will want to consider asking the voters to de-Bruce the general fund revenue so that we can continue to assist our water users through the leveraging of State and other local government grants. Additionally, the Board may want to discuss the pros and cons of drafting a sunset clause into this question.

We look forward to a robust discussion of this matter. Please feel free to reach out to me to discuss any and all of the questions you may have before the meeting.

c. Colorado River Basin Hydrology 2019 Forecast

Don Meyer and Dave Kanzer will provide a brief update on our plentiful water year at the meeting. Given the quickly changing nature of this year's hydrology and the anticipated publishing of the Bureau of Reclamation's 24 month Colorado River Basin forecast just before the April quarterly meeting, we thought it best to give you up to date information at the meeting.

d. Phase III Risk Study Update

Since the brief Risk Study update presented at the Feb. 15 budget workshop, Hydros Consulting, Inc. has been making steady progress getting into the core tasks scoped in Phase III. The key discussion point in February was the preliminary Statemod finding that West Slope pre-compact use totals 1.5 – 1.6 MAF opposed to 1.1 – 1.2 MAF as previously believed. Over the past month Hydros has:

1. Continued to evaluate the pre-compact consumptive use (CU) estimates,
2. Incorporated the individual basin future depletions (PBO allowances or a proxy where there is no PBO) into Statemod,
3. Investigated and remedied apparent discrepancies between individual basin Statemod models and the linked basin Statemod model released by the CWCb,
4. Started to evaluate the Lake Powell risk profile, comparing the risk of dropping below Elevation: 3525 under the existing level of depletions to the risk that exists under the future level of depletions.

Additional findings are anticipated between the time of this update and the Board meeting. At the Board meeting staff will provide a PowerPoint presentation with the latest findings. The Risk Study efforts are expected to culminate at the 4 WSBRT meeting on May 2 in Grand Junction.

e. Cost-Share Agreement for Water Bank Work Group Secondary Impacts Study and other WBWG matters.

Please see attached Memo (accessed in the electronic packet by clicking [here](#)).

f. Water Smart Grant Application

Please see attached Memo (accessed in the electronic packet by clicking [here](#)).

g. Upper Colorado Wild and Scenic Stakeholder Group Contract approval

Please see attached Memo (accessed in the electronic packet by clicking [here](#)).

h. Service Anniversaries

We look forward to celebrating Don Meyer's 20 years of service with the District, which appropriately occurred on April 1st of this year.



MEMORANDUM
APRIL 4, 2019

TO: **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

FROM: **ANDREW MUELLER**

SUBJECT: **2019 COST SHARE AGREEMENT – WATER BANK WORK GROUP**

ACTION:

**AUTHORIZATION TO ENTER INTO A NEW 2019 COST SHARE AGREEMENT WITH
WBWG PARTNERS IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$28,000 AND TO BE THE
FISCAL MANAGER OF THE COST SHARE FUNDS.**

STRATEGIC INITIATIVE(S):

- 4.C.) *Colorado River Supplies* - Continue to study mechanisms, such as *Compact Water Bank and Contingency Planning* that include demand management...**
- 6.A) *Agricultural Water Use* – Continue to study the concept of a voluntary and compensated water bank in collaboration with other stakeholders to best preserve western Colorado agriculture.**
- 6.B) *Agricultural Water Use* – Explore alternative transfer methods that allow agricultural water users to benefit from the value of their water rights with the permanent transfer of the rights, and without adverse impacts to the local communities and regional economy.**
- 6.C.) *Agricultural Water Use* – Work to ensure that the burden of demand reduction is shared across all types of water use sectors, and that agricultural water rights, and agriculture itself, are not injured.**

Background: The Colorado River District has been a participant and leader in the Colorado River Water Bank Work Group (WBWG) since its inception in 2008. The WBWG has actively supported completion of various technical studies that have informed our understanding of a potential water bank/demand management program as a means to help avoid or mitigate a Colorado River Compact curtailment. Studies have included a Preliminary Water Bank Feasibility Study, research associated with deficit or split season irrigation on conserved consumptive use for hay and alfalfa crops, System Conservation Pilot Program in the Grand Valley, and literature review/study on secondary economic impacts from fallowing programs in other areas. In addition, the River District has served as the fiscal entity overseeing at least three previous cost share agreements with WBWG partners.

2019 COST SHARE AGREEMENT – WATER BANK WORK GROUP

APRIL 4, 2019

Page 2

The proposed new 2019 Cost Share Agreement (CSA) would be specifically for a scope of work to complete a Secondary Economic Impact Study. The 2019 CSA would be for an amount not to exceed \$227,000 which would cover the cost of the consultant/BBC contract (\$222,000), the River District management fee (3%), and miscellaneous meeting expenses. Of the total CSA amount (\$227,000), a balance of approximately \$97,000 is being rolled over from the previous 2016 CSA. New contributions from partners would total approximately \$130,000 of which the Southwestern Water Conservation District, Nature Conservancy, and River District will each be contributing \$28,000, Tri-State Generation currently approved for \$17,500, and new WBWG CSA partners and/or the CWCB contributing the remaining \$28,500. The River District has proposed to split their \$28,000 contribution between two fiscal years (\$17.5k in 2019 and \$10.5k in 2020).

Staff is seeking Board authorization for the River District General Manager to enter into a new 2019 WBWG CSA for up to \$28,000 of River District general funds and authorization to fiscally manage the CSA funds on behalf of WBWG partners.

[GO BACK](#)



MEMORANDUM
APRIL 2, 2019

TO: **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

FROM: **SONJA CHAVEZ**

SUBJECT: **WATERSMART WATER MARKETING STRATEGY GRANT PROPOSAL 2019**

ACTION:

- 1. AUTHORIZATION TO PROCEED WITH A GRANT PROPOSAL OF UP TO \$400,000.00.**
- 2. AUTHORIZE DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY TO THE GENERAL MANAGER TO COMMIT COST-SHARE (CASH OR IN-KIND) RESOURCES OF THE RIVER DISTRICT IN THE AMOUNTS NECESSARY TO MATCH ANY GRANT AWARD, UP TO A TOTAL OF \$150,000, SUBJECT TO FUTURE ANNUAL APPROPRIATION BY THE BOARD.**
- 3. RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT**

STRATEGIC INITIATIVE(S):

1. Outreach and Advocacy: B, C, E	7. Water Needs / Project Development: C
2. Outreach in All Basins: B	8. Colorado's Water Plan: B, D
3. Climate Change: B, C	11. River District Staff Resources
4. Colorado River Supplies: B, C, D	12. Financial Sustainability: A
6. Agricultural Water Use: A, B, C	

Background: WaterSMART is a competitive federal grant program administered by the Bureau of Reclamation. The WaterSMART Water Marketing Strategy Grant leverages Federal and non-Federal funding to work cooperatively with local, state and tribal entities to support collaborative planning efforts to develop water market strategies that will proactively address water supply reliability and increase water management flexibility in order to help water users meet demands efficiently in times of shortage, thereby helping to prevent water conflicts and expand the lines of communication among community stakeholders. A “water marketing strategy” is a *framework* for implementation of water marketing activities such as: 1) outreach and partnership building; 2) planning activities (e.g., hydrologic, economic, legal and other types of analyses); 3) associated pilot activities integral to the development of a strategy; and 4) development of a water marketing strategy document describing how water marketing activities will be implemented.

The River District has been taking a strong leadership and advocacy role with regard to evaluating, educating, and seeking public input into a potential Demand Management Program. Those efforts have included the various phases of the Risk Study Hydrologic Modeling Analyses, educating and informing our elected officials and general public, advocating for utilizing sound data to inform our decision making and developing a framework that results in proportional responsibility for

implementing demand management in a manner that is either beneficial to West Slope water users or at least does no harm.

Request: Staff proposes that the Colorado River District submit a proposal for up to \$400,000 to Reclamation's WaterSMART Water Marketing Strategy Grant Funding Opportunity (FY 2019) in support of a 3-year project. The grant proposal would be regionally defined to the Western Slope and would support the following Demand Management activities:

- Phase III and future phase(s) of Hydrologic Risk Study Modeling analyses;
- Public outreach and West Slope stakeholder collaboration; and
- Secondary Economic Impact Study.

The grant terms require a minimum 1:1 match contribution from the grant recipient or partners in the form of cash or in-kind contribution. The grant has a one-year "look back" period that allows an applicant to count previously expended funds in support of the project as in-kind match. Matching funds would be provided through a combination of current and anticipated future cash expenditures and in-kind services being provided by the River District and its cost share partners (e.g., SWWCD, TNC, Tri-State Generation).

Thus, staff also requests that the Colorado River District delegate authority to the General Manager to commit future River District cash or in-kind resources as match to the grant award, up to \$150,000 for the project purposes discussed below, subject to actual annual appropriation by the Board. The exact numbers involved in this grant are a bit of a moving target and will not be fully determined until the grant is received and specific project or budget allocations are made. An example budget is presented below.

Example WaterSMART Budget: DRAFT Subject to Change									
Activity	2019		2020		2021	SUMMARY			
	CRWCD	Partners	CRWCD	Partners	CRWCD	TOTAL LOCAL MATCH	WaterSMART Request	GRAND TOTAL	
Risk Study Hydrologic Modeling (Phase III)	\$75,000	\$75,000				\$150,000	\$50,000	\$200,000	
Risk Study Future Phases			\$15,000	\$25,000		\$40,000	\$100,000	\$140,000	
Secondary Econ Impact Study	\$17,500	\$77,500	\$12,500	\$12,500		\$120,000	\$50,000	\$170,000	
Stakeholder Outreach/Public Input	\$5,000		\$5,000		\$5,000	\$15,000	\$75,000	\$90,000	
TOTALS:	\$97,500	\$152,500	\$32,500	\$37,500	\$5,000	\$325,000	\$275,000	\$600,000	

CRWCD Match Total:	\$135,000
Partner Match Total:	\$190,000
TOTAL MATCH:	\$325,000

Benefits of pursuing a grant proposal include the ability to:

- 1) Leverage current and future cash and in-kind contributions;
- 2) Support future staff resource contributions to the projects;
- 3) Obtain additional support from outside consultants (i.e. professional public facilitator); and
- 4) Ensure that there are adequate resources to carry out comprehensive analyses, thorough community stakeholder involvement processes, and methods for sharing results.

[GO BACK](#)



MEMORANDUM

April 2, 2019

TO: CRWCD Board of Directors
Andy Mueller, General Manager
Peter Fleming, General Counsel

FROM: Michael Eytel, Senior Water Resources Specialist *ME*

Subject: Wild & Scenic Technical Support

ACTION: Staff requests the Board authorize the General Manager to enter into a two year contract not to exceed \$30,250 with Bishop-Brogden Associates, Inc. to provide technical support to the West Slope Water Users' Interest Group related to the development of the Wild & Scenic Alternative Management Plan.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES: *1. Outreach and Advocacy
4. Colorado River Supplies
10. Water Quality.*

This request would replace an expiring contract with Bishop-Brogden Associates, Inc. (“BBA”) to provide technical support to the Wild and Scenic West Slope Water User Interest Group. The expiring contract was performed under the River District’s General Manager’s \$25,000 authority with 50% of the cost paid by Middle Park Water Conservancy District. The new contract will extend BBA’s services for two more years. Middle Park will continue to pay the other 50% of the cost (\$30,250 over the next two years). The range of services include:

- Technical Analysis and Review of Hydrology.
- USGS Flushing Flow Study Review and Analysis
- Stakeholder Meeting Participation – Technical Representative to West Slope Water Users Interest Group.
- Technical Committee Support – Boating and Fishing Ad-Hoc Committees

The Upper Colorado River Wild and Scenic Stakeholder Group was formed as an independent, collaborative group in 2007. The intention is to balance permanent protection of the Outstandingly Remarkable Values (ORV’s), certainty for the stakeholders, water project yield, and flexibility for water users along the Upper Colorado River. This contract with Bishop Brogden is to provide technical support to the West Slope Water User Interest Group over the next two years, while the Alternative Management Plan is finalized. River District staff recommends Board authorization to enter into a new 2 year contract with BBA not to exceed \$30,250, subject to annual appropriations.